

## **THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT POST NATAL DEPRESSION (PND)...**

- PND is a form of depression experienced by mothers which impacts on all members of your family.
- PND can occur any time, but is most common in the first few months after your baby is born, and may also occur during pregnancy.
- Figures vary, but show that 1 in 7 to 10 mothers will suffer from PND regardless of their age, culture, or family income.
- PND can have an effect on the emotional development of your baby.
- PND should not be confused with the “Baby Blues” which affects many mothers in the early days of parenting and does not last long.
- PND will affect women in varying degrees. Treatment needs to be tailored to the mother’s needs and may be as simple as having someone to talk with about it.
- There is no “quick fix” for PND. All mothers with PND benefit from the understanding of family, friends and parenting support services.

## **IDENTIFYING PND EARLY MAKES A DIFFERENCE...**

Many of the signs of PND are things you and your partner will naturally experience as a part of your early parenting and are not cause for concern.

It is when these things continue over some time, or are severe, that there can be a problem.

If you have any concerns seek help as early as possible. As with other forms of depression, the earlier PND is identified the easier it is to treat and overcome.

PND is not a condition to be embarrassed or ashamed about. Bringing it out in the open is the best way to deal with it.

## **SITUATIONS THAT CAN CONTRIBUTE TO PND...**

- Depression during pregnancy
- Previous history of depression
- Major stressful life events, e.g. moving house, a death in the family, loss of income, financial hardship.
- Lack of support or social isolation.
- Difficult birth
- Unmet expectations regarding breastfeeding, bonding, and general parenting.

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR...

- Mood swings
- Feelings of inadequacy, hopelessness, anger, guilt
- Loss of interest in baby
- Anxiety and sadness
- Extended lack of interest in sex
- Loss of appetite
- Loss of confidence
- Inability to sleep

## DAD'S...

Supporting a person with PND can be stressful and lonely and can sometimes leave you feeling down and frustrated.

Take a break every now and then and do something for yourself.

Your partner and baby need you to be strong and well. It is important for you to seek help if you find the going tough, so that you don't become run down.

## WHERE TO GET HELP...

Your family GP is central to the diagnosis and treatment of PND. Additional support is available from:

- Child and Family Health Centres
- Parenting Centres
- Mother and Baby Units
- Post Natal Support Groups

### **Websites to visit:**

- [www.beyondblue.org.au/postnataldepression](http://www.beyondblue.org.au/postnataldepression)
- [www.calvarytas.com.au](http://www.calvarytas.com.au)
- [www.cyh.com](http://www.cyh.com)